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DE RUEHKH #0649/01 1371049  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3797  
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE  
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE  
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000649

DEPT FOR SE GRATION, S/USSES, AF A/S CARSON, AF/C  
NSC FOR MGAVIN  
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN  
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [ASEC](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)  
SUBJECT: SLA/AW COMMANDER CONSENTS TO CEASEFIRE, BUT STILL  
UNENTHUSED ABOUT DOHA

REF: KHARTOUM 481

11. (SBU) Summary: SLA/Abdul Wahid General Commander Gaddura said his movement would agree to a formal 90-day ceasefire with the GOS and other Darfur rebel movements, but will not travel to Doha or any other Arab country for peace negotiations. With his territory in urgent need of additional humanitarian aid, Gaddura welcomed the presence of international NGOs and UN officials in Jebel Marra, but bristled at recent comments by UNAMID JSR Adada asserting an improvement in the security situation in Darfur. Admitting that Abdul Wahid El Nur can be "difficult," the decidedly pro-American commander said his movement has significant leverage over Wahid El Nur and could bring about the rebel faction's agreement to a negotiated solution in Darfur. End Summary.

12. (SBU) On a joint Pol/USAID trip to the remote Darfuri region of Jebel Marra on May 12, poloff and TDY A/RSO met with leading senior commanders in Sudanese Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW) to discuss the potential for a cease-fire and peace in Darfur. Relaxed and jocular in the company of dozens of well-armed Fur rebels under his command, SLA/AW General Commander Gaddura thanked poloff profusely for the April 5 visit of Presidential Special Envoy Gen. Scott Gration (reftel), adding that he was delighted that President Obama had named a retired military officer to engage in deliberations with the Government of Sudan (GOS) and also to reach out to the rebel movements in Darfur. (Note: SE Gration met Gaddura briefly on April 5, but Gaddura arrived too late to the meeting to engage in substantive discussions. End note.) Gaddura did not travel in late April to Geneva for the two-week SLA/AW conference organized by the Swiss government, preferring instead to remain in the field, but said he is eagerly awaiting the return of his commanders for further consultations on the future of the movement.

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YELLOW ON CEASEFIRE, RED ON DOHA  
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13. (SBU) Emphatic that his movement continues to respect the 2004 N'Djamena ceasefire, Gaddura said that he and his fighters would accept - a Darfur-wide ceasefire based on two conditions: 1) that the U.S. and the Special Envoy back its implementation; and 2) that the GOS quickly resolve the question of the expelled NGOs. With the promise of a peace deal and development assistance to follow any ceasefire, Gaddura views a 90-day cessation of hostilities as a positive step in building trust among the movements, and between the movements and the international community. Pointing to the recent Sudanese Armed Forces' (SAF) offensive in the SLA/AW-controlled areas of Korma and Dobo Madrasa, Gaddura cautioned that should the GOS break the ceasefire with armed aggression in SLA/AW territory, his movement would hold the international community responsible as being unable to hold the GOS to its agreements.

14. (SBU) Gaddura dismissed numerous times the idea of SLA/AW participation in negotiations with the GOS in Doha. While his assistants were translating the thank-you note signed by SE Gration, Gaddura snorted loudly at the mention of Doha talks, wagging his forefinger in disapproval. In discussing the Doha talks, the entire SLA/AW leadership dismissed Qatari sponsorship as fundamentally disadvantageous to the Fur, and cited the history of Arab countries in supporting the Khartoum regime, first against the SPLA, and then against the African tribes in Darfur. "The Arabs are not able to solve their own problems, and they have said many times that there are no problems in Darfur," he bemoaned. "We do not agree to go to Qatar. Why can't we have talks in America? Or Johannesburg?" With agreement from Gaddura, SLA/AW Legal Secretary Abdalla Bakr added that the movement will view any agreement in Doha as one that resolves the conflict between the GOS and the Justice Equality Movement (JEM), without addressing at all the underlying causes of the conflict between the Fur and the Arabs in Darfur.

15. (SBU) To the rebels high in the hills of Jebel Marra, the main stumbling block to peace in Darfur remains what they regard as the intransigence of senior leadership in the National Congress Party (NCP). Veterans of years of on-again, off-again conflict in addition to seven NCP-supported agreements, commanders in the Fur faction repeatedly voiced the position that Khartoum's invasive Islamist vision has no place among Darfuris, whether Arab or African, and this disconnect will continue to fuel the conflict until Khartoum's motives in the region reverse course. Their mistrust of the regime extends to any potential ceasefire; Gaddura predicted that the GOS would find a way to subvert the ceasefire by using janjaweed militias to carry out ground attacks on rebel movements and restive areas.

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GREEN ON AID, YELLOW ON UNAMID, RED ON ADADA  
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16. (SBU) More easily-engaged than their recalcitrant leader, all the lead commanders in SLA/AW agreed that the international community is welcome in the "liberated areas" of Jebel Marra, and with the need for humanitarian aid particularly acute, Gaddura personally pleaded for NGOs involved in water and sanitation issues to commence work soon throughout the mountainous region. Although areas near Rokero, West Darfur, and Korma, North Darfur, are particularly affected, the current NGOs operating out of Deribat (USAID partner NGO Samaritan's Purse, and Medecines du Monde) have no technical agreements to operate in the areas of Jebel Marra outside the geographical borders of South Darfur. This leaves a large number of Fur without any humanitarian assistance. Following GOS bombing near Dobo Madrassa in February, between 4,000 to 5,000 Fur relocated to ad-hoc IDP settlements in North Darfur, severing contact with both their traditional leadership structures and the NGOs that assisted them. (Humanitarian assessment by AIDoff to be reported septel.)

17. (SBU) Initial mention of UNAMID wakened a growling reaction from the rebel commanders, who spoke derisively of comments by U.N. Joint Special Representative Rodolphe Adada in New York that described Darfur as a "low-intensity conflict" with "improved humanitarian conditions." "We are not ready to cooperate with Adada because he does not tell the real story about Darfur," Gaddura barked. "The African Union visited in the past - where is UNAMID?" Upon further reflection, Gaddura and his commanders, including the SLA/AW's most recent recruit Abu Bakr Kado (to be reported septel), said they would welcome a working-level visit by UNAMID officials to discuss the situation in Jebel Marra and to establish regular relations between the faction and international peacekeepers.

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YELLOW ON ABDUL WAHID, GREEN ON AMERICA  
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18. (SBU) Still somewhat deferential to Abdul Wahid El Nur in front of his troops and senior commanders, Gaddura occasionally voiced frustration at the movement's inability to evolve beyond a Jebel

Marra-based militarized faction. At the end of the day, however, the feisty commander pulled poloff aside to frankly discuss his personal opinion of Paris' most famous Darfuri. "We understand that he is difficult," he said, and gesturing with his hands for emphasis, Gaddura added, "SLA tries to reach out to the international community, but he pulls us back." Gaddura assured poloff that the organization will continue to move in a way it sees feasible, and that SLA/AW can "push him" (i.e. Abdul Wahid) to deal with the international community if the situation on the ground is sufficiently beneficial to SLA/WA objectives. "If we support something from the international community, so will Abdul Wahid."

¶9. (SBU) Although privately ambivalent about Abdul Wahid's leadership, Gaddura publicly emphasized numerous times his movement's support for U.S. initiatives in Sudan and the U.S. presence in Darfur, at one time even pledging that SLA could be the "right hand" of the U.S. in Darfur. Also keen to have the UK Ambassador to Sudan visit Jebel Marra, Gaddura said he looks forward to further contact with U.S. diplomatic representatives, and added that should U.S. sanctions be lifted, he personally would welcome American mining companies to tap the rich mineral reserves of Jebel Marra.

¶10. (SBU) Comment: While Jebel Marra, the last rebel stronghold in Darfur, may not be impervious to SAF military advances, SLA/AW commanders will continue to negotiate as if it is. Far from being a conspiracy imposed from on high in Paris, however, the movement's refusal to travel to Doha reflects long-standing grievances dating back decades, and is closely aligned with the hard-line tactics employed by Fur IDP leaders in Kalma IDP camp in South Darfur. Fortunately, Gaddura and his motley crew of dreadlocked warriors welcome U.S. initiatives in Darfur. A combination of skillful diplomacy and increased humanitarian assistance to Jebel Marra could bear fruit in bringing the simmering conflict in the region to an end. This is especially the case if the GOS is willing to adhere to the 2004 N'Djamena ceasefire agreement and further to allow aid to flow into the isolated and marginalized, but largely peaceful, Fur homeland of Jebel Marra. End comment.

ASQUINO